

# Ready to Read

## An Early Literacy Newsletter

Renée Edwards, Early Literacy Services, Fairfax County Public Library



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## Help Children Understand Books: Read Cumulative Stories

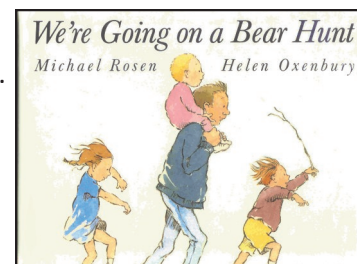


When we read to preschool children, we want them to enjoy the story and the book-sharing experience. For this to happen, it is

important they understand, or comprehend, what they are hearing. Children who understand stories will sit and listen because they are interested in what will happen next.

Interactive reading—allowing children to participate in the reading through questions and discussion—helps us assess whether or not children comprehend what they are hearing. Reading cumulative stories is one way we can actively involve children in our book sharing. According to the *Reading Resource Book* by Mary Jett Simpson, cumulative stories “invite children to make predictions or guesses about words, phrases, sentences, events and characters that could come next in the story.”

There are two types of cumulative stories. One type focuses on an event, building on and adding to the event each time a new action is introduced. We will call these “build and repeat” stories. An example of a build and repeat story is *This Is the House That Jack Built*. The second type of cumulative story repeats the main plot with some small change. We will call these “pattern stories.” *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt* is an example of a pattern story.

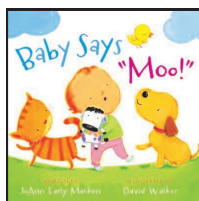


Reading is a two-step process because we have to decode words and comprehend their meaning. Cumulative stories will help preschool children learn how to listen and understand what they are hearing. This will aid children in comprehending the books they learn to read when they are in school.

## The Library Can Help

Fairfax County Public Library has a wonderful selection of cumulative stories. Find these and many other books at your neighborhood library branch!

### Build and Repeat Cumulative Stories



**Baby Says “Moo!”** by JoAnn Early Macken

A cumulative, rhyming tale of a baby who sees many animals while out with her family, but only one makes her favorite sound.

**The Bridge Is Up!** by Babs Bell

A traffic jam is created when everyone has to wait for the bridge to come down.

**The Cake That Mack Ate** by Rose Robart

A cumulative tale about the chain of events surrounding the making of a cake by a farmer's wife.

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(*"The Library Can Help"* continued from page 1)

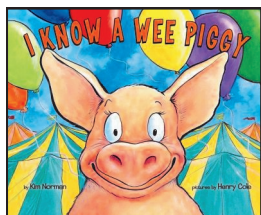
**The Cazuela That the Farm Maiden Stirred**

by Samantha R. Vamos

A farm maiden who, aided by a group of animals, prepares "arroz con leche," or rice pudding.

**The Deep Blue Sea** by Audrey Wood

This story introduces various colors by presenting a colorful scene on a rock in the deep blue sea.



**I Know a Wee Piggy** by Kim Norman

An ordinary pig leaps out of a boy's arms at a state fair and wallows in color after color, turning himself into a work of art.

**Jack's House** by Karen Magnuson Beil

Cumulative text reveals who was really responsible for the house that Jack claims to have built, and all of the trucks involved, from the bulldozer used to clear the land to the van that brought a hammock for the backyard.

**Move Over, Rover!** by Karen Beaumont

When a storm comes, Rover expects to have his doghouse all to himself but finds that various other animals, including a skunk, come to join him.

**This Is the Baby** by Candace Fleming

A cumulative rhyme enumerating all the items of clothing that go on the baby who hates to be dressed.

**This Is the Van That Dad Cleaned** by Lisa Campbell Ernst

The children undo all of Dad's hard work cleaning the family car.



**Pattern Cumulative Stories**

**The Best Picnic Ever** by Clare Jarrett

While his mother prepares a picnic, Jack invites a giraffe, an elephant and other animals to lunch and each eagerly agrees, as long as they can play first.

**Boom Boom Go Away!** by Laura Geringer

A cumulative rhyme in which a young boy emphatically and noisily tells his parents to go away when they say it is time for bed.

**Chicken Little** by Rebecca and Ed Emberley

Chicken Little has an acorn fall on his head, and he runs in a panic to his friends to tell them the sky is falling.

**The Enormous Turnip** by Alexei Tolstoy

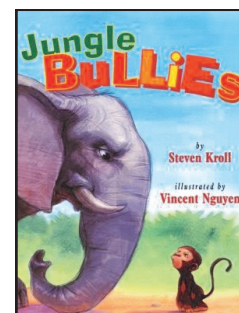
A turnip that is planted by an old man grows so enormous that everyone must help to pull it up.

**Jungle Bullies** by Steven Kroll

To get what they want, the larger jungle animals bully the smaller ones until Mama Monkey shows them all the benefits of sharing.

**Oh, Look!** by Patricia Polacco

Three goats visit a fair but run home after they seem to encounter a troll.



**Mother, Mother, I Want Another** by Maria Polushkin Robbins

Mrs. Mouse is anxious to get her son to sleep and goes off to find what she thinks he wants.

**The Squeaky Door** by Margaret Read MacDonald  
When Little Boy is frightened by a squeaky bedroom door, his grandmother brings in animals to help him feel secure enough to sleep.

**Stuck** by Oliver Jeffers

When Floyd's kite gets stuck in a tree, he tries to knock it down with increasingly larger and more outrageous things.

**Stuck in the Mud** by Jane Clarke

A little chick needs help from all his farmyard friends to get out of the mud.

**The Three Bears** by Byron Barton

A little girl walking in the woods finds the house of the three bears and helps herself to their belongings.